

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-16

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R 161705Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3322

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IN, SN, ID, MY, KN, KS

SUBJ: SWARAN SINGH'S VISIT TO SINGAPORE, JAKARTA, SEOUL

REFS: A. SINGAPORE 3301(NOTAL) B. JAKARTA 9841(NOTAL)

C. SEOUL 5244 PARA 5(NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SWARAN SINGH RETURNED TO DELHI LATE EVENING AUGUST 13 FROM A NINE-DAY SWING THROUGH SINGAPORE, JAKARTA AND SEOUL, WITH A BRIEF STOPOVER IN MANILA. PRESS REPORTS AND SEVERAL MEA CONTACTS (WHO ACKNOWLEDGE THE DO NOT YET HAVE BENEFIT OF SINGH'S PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS INDICATE THE TALKS FULLY MET GOI EXPECTATIONS. SPECIFIC AGREEMENTS ON TRADE AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE WITH ROK AND BORDER DEMARCATION (NICOBAR ISLANDS) WITH INDONESIA WERE SIGNED. THE ONLY SOUR NOTES WERE REGISTERED

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HERE BY THE INDIAN COMMUNIST PARTY (CPI) WHICH OBJECTED TO SINGH'S

SEOUL VISIT, AND THE MALAYSIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER WHO INDICATED TO AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN THAT KUALA LUMPUR OUGHT TO HAVE BEEN ON THE ITINERARY. THE MEA UNDERSTANDS FROM THIRD PARTIES THAT THE NORTH KOREANS ARE ALSO UFWHBS# END SUMMARY.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER SINGH STOPPED FIRST IN SINGAPORE AUGUST 4-6. A SINGAPORE HIGH COMMISSION OFFICIAL IN DELHI HAS CONFIRMED TO AN EMBOFF GENERAL NATURE OF DISCUSSION REPORTED IN REFTEL A. A COMMENTARY BY STATESMAN CORRESPONDENT IN SINGAPORE (S. VISWAN) SUGGESTS ADDITIONALLY THAT THE TWO SIDES EXCHANGED CLEARLY DIFFERING VIEWS ON IOZP. ACCORDING TO VISWAM, IT EMERGED THAT SINGAPORE SIDES (THOUGH NOT PUBLICLY) WITH THAILAND IN BELIEVING THAT THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT INDIAN OCEAN TENSION IS "TO ALLOW ALL POWERS TO OPERATE FREELY IN IO, THUS REMOVING COMPETITIVE ATMOSPHERE."

3. SINGH'S VISIT AUGUST 6-8 IN JAKARTA CONCLUDED WITH A COMMUNIQUE (REFTEL B) AS WELL AS SEABED BOUNDARY AGREEMENT WHICH HAS ATTRACTED CONSIDERABLE PRESS ATTENTION HERE. THE AGREEMENT, BY DELIMITING A MARITIME BOUNDARY BETWEEN NICOBAR AND NORTH SUMATRA ISLANDS, PURPORTS TO FORESTALL POSSIBLE BILATERAL CONFLICTS OVER FISH AND SEABED RESOURCES IN THE AREA. (EMBASSY WILL TRY TO OBTAIN A COPY WHEN IT IS MADE AVAILABLE.) COMING ON THE HEELS OF A SIMILAR DEMARCATION AGREEMENT RECENTLY NEGOTIATED WITH SRI LANKA, THE JAKARTA AGREEMENT IS ALSO REPRESENTED HERE AS FURTHER PROOF THAT INDIA IS DETERMINED TO MAKE THE INDIAN OCEAN A ZONE OF PEACE.

4. DURING A FIVE-DAY STAY IN THE ROK, FOREIGN MINISTER SINGH SIGNED BOTH A TRADE AND CULTURAL EXCHANGE AGREEMENT. ALTHOUGH NO TRADE PROJECTIONS WERE PROVIDED, PRESS REPORTS INDICATE THAT INDIA HOPES TO SUBSTANTIALLY IMPROVE UPON ITS ELEVEN MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF EXPORTS TO THE ROK IN 1973. THE AGREEMENT'S TERMS HAVE TO BE SPELLED OUT IN FURTHER TALKS AT THE EXPERTS' LEVEL. AN MEA OFFICIAL TOLD AN EMBOFF AUGUST 14 THAT THE GOI BEGAN FOCUSSEING MORE SERIOUSLY ON ROK RELATIONS AS A CONSEQUENCE OF A SOUTH KOREAN ORDER FOR SOME SEVEN MILLION DOLLARS WORTH OF INDIAN TEXTILE MACHINERY IN THE SPRING. THE GOI WAS EXTREMELY PLEASED BY THIS EXPRESSION OF CONFIDENCE IN INDIAN MANUFACTURED GOODS, AND IS NOW VERY OPTIMISTIC ABOUT FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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OVERALL BILATERAL RELATIONS AND TRADE.

5. AS REPORTED IN PARA 5 REFTEL C, FOREIGN MINISTER SINGH ALSO INDICATED TO SEOUL THAT THE GOI WOULD TAKE A POSITION SIMILAR TO THE ONE INDIA EVENTUALLY ADOPTED AT LAST YEAR'S UNGA DURING THIS FALL'S UNGA CONSIDERATION OF THE KOREAN ITE.. IF SO, THIS WOULD BE WELCOME.

6. THE DPRK EMBASSY IN DELHI IS REPORTEDLY UPSET THAT SEOUL RATHER THAN PYONGYANG HOSTED SINGH'S VISIT. ACCORDING TO AN MEA OFFICIAL, PYONGHANG HAD "REPEATEDLY" EXTENDED INVITATIONS TO SINGH IN THE PAST, AND IS NOW SIGNALLING ITS DISPLEASURE AT SINGH'S SLIGHT THROUGH THIRD-PARTIES TO THE MEA. THE MEA OFFICIAL WOULD NOT ELABORATE BUT EXPLAINED AWAY (LAMELY, IT SEEMS TO US) THE KOREAN COMPLAINT BY SAYING THAT THE ROK FOREIGN MINISTER HAD VISITED INDIA (AUGUST 1972) SO A RETURN VISIT WAS IN ORDER. BESIDES, HE CONTINUED, A NORTH KOREAN DELEGATION (AT THE INVITATION OF THE INDO-KOREAN FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY) WAS CURRENTLY VISITING INDIA.

7. THE CPI CENTRAL SECRETARIAT ISSUED A STATEMENT AUGUST 7 CONDEMNING THE SEOUL VISIT. CPI LEADER MUKHERJEE ACCUSED SINGH OF AN "UNMISTAKEABLE TILT" IN HIS POLICY, AND THE MEA OF HAVING AS ITS "MODEL MAESTRO" SECRETARY KISSINGER. AN MEA OFFICIAL COMMENTED TO AN EMBOFF AUGUST 15 THAT THE CPI ATTACK IS TO BE SEEN MORE AS AN EFFORT TO EMBARRASS THE GOVERNMENT IN ADVANCE OF SECRETARY KISSINGER'S VISIT RATHER THAN TO DEFEND NORTH KOREA'S INTERESTS.

8. DURING AN INITIAL CALL ON AMBASSADOR MOYNIHAN AUGUST 14, MALAYSIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER KHALID INDICATED THAT DISCUSSIONS ABOUT A SINGH VISIT TO KUALA LUMPUR HAD BEEN CONDUCTED FOR SEVERAL MONTHS IN THE SPRING BUT THE GOI THEN ABRUPTLY DROPPED THE IDEA. HE OFFERED THE IMPRESSION THAT THE INDIANS WERE UPSET BECAUSE OF MALAYSIA'S ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH PRC IN LATE MAY. LATER THE SAME DAY AN MEA OFFICIAL CONFIRMED TO AN EMBOFF THAT A SINGH VISIT TO KUALA LUMPUR HAD BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION BUT WAS SCRATCHED FOR "TECHNICAL" REASONS. WHILE DENYING THAT GOM'S ESTABLISHMENT OF RELATIONS WITH CHINA BORE ON INDIAN DECISION, HE ADMITTED THAT CERTAIN ASPECTS OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THE MALAYSIAN BEHAVIOR IN THIS REGARD SEEMED BIZARRE, ESPECIALLY THE DECLARATION OF A NATIONAL HOLIDAY IN THE WAKE OF THE ESTABLISHMENT ANNOUNCEMENT. SEVERAL NEW DELHI DIPLOMATS HAVE ALSO EXPRESSED PUZZLEMENT ABOUT THE OMISSION OF KUALA LUMPUR FROM THE ITINERARY.

COMMENT: A MORE COMPLETE PICTURE OF SINGH'S NINE-DAY SWING WILL EMERGE IN BITS AND PIECES IN COMING DAYS. AT THIS POINT THE TRIP SEEMS TO BOIL DOWN TO A GOOD EFFORT BY THE GOI TO PROMOTE TRADE AND TIE UP SOME LOOSE ENDS WITH ASIAN NEAR-NEIGHBORS BEFORE TURNING TO NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE US AND SOVIET UNION THIS FALL. THE EFFORTS WERE SUCCESSFUL IN TERMS OF SEVERAL AGREEMENTS AND THE STRENGTHENING OF SINGH'S PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH HIS COUNTERPARTS. MOYNIHAN

NOTE BY OC/T: # AS RECEIVED.

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